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Eleventh Census: 1890. Report on Population of the United States. Part I. Washington, 1895.—4to, ccxiii, 968 pp.

This volume surpasses all previous census records of population in its elaborate technique and full presentation of results. The change is due largely to the indefatigable efforts of Mr. Wm. C. Hunt, who had charge of the population division, and who brought to the work training and experience gained in the Massachusetts enumeration of 1885. If any criticism is to be made, it is that details have sometimes been worked out without regard to their real value. An example of this is the calculation of the distribution of population according to drainage basins. It is interesting to know that 43.77% of the entire population is congregated in the basin of the Mississippi river; but it is not particularly vivifying to learn that 709 foreign-born persons live in the valley of the Pedee, and 99 colored persons in that of the Chippewa.

Methods of presentation are, however, of minor importance compared with the question of the general accuracy and trustworthiness of the census itself. Unfortunately, it must be confessed that, in public estimation, the eleventh census is somewhat under a cloud. It has cost an immense sum of money (over \$11,000,000, besides printing); its publication has been unreasonably delayed (six years have elapsed and some of the most important parts are still in the hands of the printer); officials have changed, and there have been acrimonious accusations of partisan methods in the original appointment of enumerators. Nevertheless, when we consider the importance of each particular census, not only in itself, but as one of a great series of similar undertakings beginning in 1790, it is evidently the part of science to make the best of what is offered, and to try to determine how much of it can be used for scientific purposes. The material may be imperfect, yet it need not be entirely rejected. We can never have a census of 1890 again; yet we must have some sort of figures to fill that particular place. If we cannot accept the results implicitly, we must try to determine the limit of probable error.

In testing the trustworthiness of a census there are three methods. The first consists in observing the attitude of the officials. A true statistician is inclined to underestimate the value of his results rather than to defend their absolute accuracy. He, most of all men, is conscious of the inadequacy of his material even when collected with the greatest care. The "office" should be the first to point

out the limitations imposed upon all such inquiries, and frankly to confess failure in any direction.¹ In general, the attitude of our census office in this respect is not altogether satisfactory. It takes too much the position of defending its figures against all comers, as if a most difficult and delicate scientific undertaking were the private affair of a few governmental officials. What we want to know is not whether they have done their work well or ill, but whether we can use this material for political and sociological reasoning. The interests of science are much more important than the scientific reputations of the officials.

The typical case involved here is the question whether the enumeration of 1890 was complete or deficient. It is well known that, while popular expectation placed the population of 1890 at 65,000,000, the census return showed only 62,622,250. The increase from 1870 to 1880 was 30.08%, while from 1880 to 1890 it was only 24.86%. This seemed inexplicable, especially considering the fact that immigration during the latter decade amounted to five and one-quarter millions, against two and one-half millions during the previous decade. There is one partial explanation, namely, that the census of 1870 was incomplete, so that the increase from 1870 to 1880 had been exaggerated. General Walker has acknowledged that the enumeration of the colored population in the South was imperfect, probably to the number of 500,000 persons. The eleventh census extends this estimate to the whites, calculating a deficiency of 747,915 whites besides 512,163 negroes, on the absolutely improbable assumption "that the increase in population of the Southern states between 1860 and 1870 and between 1870 and 1880 were related to one another in a proportion similar to the corresponding rates in the Northern states during the same periods." I say this is an improbable assumption, because it implies that the war period had no greater influence on the population of the South than on that of the North. On the basis of this assumption the census shows an increase

From 1860 to 1870 of 26.64%,

" 1870 to 1880 of 25.96%,

" 1880 to 1890 of 24.86%.

This "rectified" table, however, involves us in the second absurdity

¹ See the remarks of Dr. Ogle in regard to the statistics of occupations, English Census Report, 1891, vol. iv, p. 35. Our office has made one similar confession in regard to the statistics of negroes, mulattoes, quadroons and octoroons. See also the sharp criticism of French statistical methods by Bertillon (an official), in his *Cours Élémentaire de Statistique*.

of supposing that population increased faster during the war period with little immigration than during either of the subsequent peace periods with enormous immigration.

The second method of testing a census is to weigh the internal evidence. Do the figures hang together? Do they show proper relations to the figures of preceding censuses? Are these relations similar to those we ordinarily find in other countries? Unfortunately it is extremely difficult to apply these tests to the United States, owing to the disturbing influence of immigration.

Some of the figures of the eleventh census are, however, very difficult of explanation. For example, the number of the foreign-born recorded in 1890, compared with the foreign-born of 1880 plus the immigrants from 1880 to 1890, allowing for a death-rate of fifteen per thousand and some emigration, shows, as I have elsewhere pointed out,¹ a deficiency of nearly a million. So, too, it is very extraordinary that, with an immigration of five and one-quarter million persons from 1880 to 1890, and a decreasing birth-rate among the native-born (as the census itself claims in its previous contention), the proportion of the foreign-born should have been only 14.77% in 1890, compared with 13.32% in 1880 and 14.44% in 1870. Another anomalous thing is the proportion of males to females. Among the foreign-born it is 842 females to 1000 males, an excess of males which the census rightly attributes to immigration. But among the native whites of native parents, where we should expect an excess of females, the proportion is only 966 females to 1000 males; and among the native whites of foreign parentage it is 989 females to 1000 males. Immigration cannot be the explanation in these cases. It would seem as if the census had either returned a good many foreign-born persons as natives or had omitted a good many native-born females, which could happen if the enumeration in rural districts was defective. At any rate, this anomalous condition of things demands explanation; for a deficiency of this sort affects all other statistics such as those of urban population, mortality, crime, conjugal condition, occupation and parental nativity.

The third method of testing the accuracy of a census is by observing the conclusions which the officials draw from the figures. Are they scientific and justifiable, or are they superficial and misleading? The change in the superintendency of the office during the progress of the census makes it somewhat difficult to fix the responsibility. But, although this volume does not show any great degree of scientific

¹ Publications of the American Statistical Association, III, p. 304.

acumen and originality, its text is generally sober and cautious in assertion. While not altogether accurate and complete, it furnishes much material that is relatively trustworthy, and which gives us many glimpses into the composition of the extraordinarily interesting population of the United States.

RICHMOND MAYO-SMITH.

Taxation and Taxes in the United States under the Internal Revenue System, 1791-1895. An Historical Sketch of the Organization, Development and Later Modification of Direct and Excise Taxation under the Constitution. By FREDERIC C. HOWE. New York, Thos. Y. Crowell & Co., 1896.—293 pp.

Although the yield of United States internal revenue almost equals, and in some years even exceeds, that of the customs, and although the system is almost as interesting from an economic standpoint, its history has been strangely neglected, and so offers a rich and inviting field for research. Dr. Howe has improved this opportunity, and, notwithstanding an occasional slip, has done the work well. He has traced the history of internal revenue taxes through the four stages of their development—under the Federalists, in the War of 1812, in the Civil War and during the last quarter of a century. Naturally the elaborate system of the Civil War period calls for most extended treatment, and fills about half the volume. Finally, the appendices give a bibliography of the subject, the rates of taxation under different acts conveniently arranged in tabular form, and other tables showing the receipts from each source from 1862 to 1895. The receipts are shown also in more detail in tables scattered through the body of the book. But for the absence of an index, the book would have a distinct value for purposes of reference.

By a curious error in the caption of the tables on pages 117 and 118 it is made to appear that the "succession tax" on realty applied only in cases of intestate succession, and the tax on legacies and distributive shares of personal property only to legacies; although elsewhere (pages 114 and 274) the distinction between the two taxes is correctly stated. In these taxes there was no "minimum deduction of \$1,000," whatever that may mean, but only an exemption of personal estates of \$1,000 or less: larger estates were taxable on the whole amount, and there was no exemption in the case of real estate. Although the exemptions are thus unduly magnified on page 115, they are neglected entirely on the following page, in the estimate of what these taxes should have produced. In quoting the